

## BOOK REVIEW

NIGEL SMITH, RODOLFO VASQUEZ, AND WALTER H. WUST. 2007. **Amazon River Fruits: Flavors for Conservation**. (ISBN 978-9972-2974-2-7, pbk.). Amazon Conservation Association, Missouri Botanical Garden Press, P.O. Box 299, St. Louis, Missouri 63166-0299, U.S.A. (**Orders:** www.mbgpress.org, mbgpress@mobot.org, 1-314-577-9534, 1-314-577-9594 fax). \$35.00, 272 pp., color figures and photographs, 9.5" × 8".

*Contents.*—Preface, Acknowledgments, Introduction, Anacardiaceae, Annonaceae, Apocynaceae, Arecaceae, Celastraceae, Chrysobalanaceae, Clusiaceae, Combretaceae, Convolvulaceae, Costaceae, Dichapetalaceae, Euphorbiaceae, Fabaceae, Gnetaceae, Lecythidaceae, Malpighiaceae, Malvaceae, Melastomataceae, Memecylaceae, Menispermaceae, Moraceae, Muntingiaceae, Myrsinaceae, Myrtaceae, Olacaceae, Passifloraceae, Polygalaceae, Polygonaceae, Rubiaceae, Sapindaceae, Sapotaceae, Simaroubaceae, Solanaceae, Theophrastaceae, Urticaceae, Verbenaceae, Bibliography Notes, References, Photo credits.

This book attempts to woo its readers by commanding the attention of all their senses. The 1.4 lb soft cover book wrapped in a mixed matte and glossy cover weighs nicely in the hand, while photographs depicting colorful Amazonian fruits and a winding Amazonian river entertain the eyes. Past this pleasing explosion of color, an 11-page introduction discusses the location and rationale for research into wild edible fruits, mentioning the high diversity of such species in wetland communities and the threats of exploitation that these habitats face.

Over 100 species of edible fruit are described from wetland areas in and around the Pacaya-Samiria National Reserve in Northern Peru, representing only a fraction of the several hundred species of wild and domesticated fruits consumed by people in this region. Species accounts are organized by the botanical family to which they belong and follow a standard format throughout the book, with the scientific names listed at the top of the page and common name(s) listed below, organized by the country to which they pertain. Most accounts are allocated two pages in the book, with a full page devoted to photographs and the remainder of the space occupied by text.

Species accounts include a discussion of the natural history of the fruit, including distribution, phenology, pollination, and dispersal, as well as a history of its management as a resource. Fruit are discussed that have been under different levels of management, from those eaten only locally (e.g., *Psychotria lorentensis*, Rubiaceae, "huanchaco huayo"), to those transported to local markets (e.g., *Passiflora nitida*, Passifloraceae, a relative of cultivated passionfruit), to those entering the international markets (e.g., *Theobroma cacao*, chocolate). Fruit descriptions are set in the context of their natural habitats and the need to make responsible choices about their cultivation, but encourage the search for emerging contributions to the world fruit choices.

The authors cater to a general naturalist audience that is interested in learning about Amazonian diversity and conservation through a readily accessible medium, one which they might easily relate to as they walk through a Peruvian marketplace. Species accounts are informative and contain sufficient information, leaving readers thirsting for more as they work through the book and gain a more complete understanding of both the environmental and cultural landscape in Amazonia.—Tiana F. Franklin, M.S. Environmental Science, Botanical Data Specialist, Botanical Research Institute of Texas, 500 East 4th Street, Fort Worth, Texas 76102-4025, U.S.A.